

Application No. 09/749,059

compaction in front of the tool. The result is that for the same consumption of power by the blending machine, it is believed that the present invention allows either greater tool speed or a larger collision plate profile. Either greater speed or larger profile result in greater blend intensity.

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please substitute amended claims 1, 3-8, and 10-11 for pending claims 1, 3-8, and 10-11 as follows:

1) (Amended) An improved blending tool for rotation in a blending machine around a central drive shaft, comprising:

- (a) a shank having a location of attachment to the central drive shaft;
- (b) a collision surface having a collision profile; and
- (c) a connector mechanism pivotally connecting the collision surface to the shank at a location spaced apart from the attachment location, wherein pivoting at the connector mechanism varies the collision profile of the collision surface.

3) (Amended) The blending tool of **claim 22** wherein pivoting of the collision surface varies the collision profile primarily in its height dimension.

4) (Amended) The blending tool of **claim 1**, wherein the collision surface comprises a collision plate spaced apart from the shank.

5) (Amended) The blending tool of **claim 4**,

- (a) wherein the shank has a first and second end region; and
- (b) further comprising at least one collision surface positioned within each end region.

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6) (Amended) The blending tool of **claim 4**, further comprising at least one arm having a first and second end wherein the first end of the arm is connected to the shank and the second end is connected to the collision plate.

7) (Amended) The blending tool of **claim 1**, wherein the connector mechanism comprises a fastener that can be unfastened for disconnecting the collision surface from the shank.

8) (Amended) The blending tool of **claim 6**, further comprising a fastener proximate to the first end of the arm, said fastener being capable of unfastening for disconnection of the arm and the collision plate from the shank.

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10) (Amended) An improved blending tool for rotation in a blending machine around a central drive shaft, comprising:

- (a) a shank having a location of attachment to the central drive;
- (b) a collision surface having a collision profile;
- (c) a connector mechanism pivotally connecting the collision surface to the shank, for connecting the collision surface to the shank in one of a plurality of preset positions that are fixed during rotation of the tool such that the collision profile of the collision surface varies with different positions of connection;
- (d) at least one arm having a first and second end wherein the first end is connected to the shank and the second end is connected to the collision surface and wherein the arm has a plurality of through holes;
- (e) a central hub having a plurality of pre-set positional holes; and
- (f) a bolt for rigidly holding the arm in positional relationship to the central hub when said bolt is inserted through the hole in the arm and into an aligned positional hole on the central hub.

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- 11) (Amended) A blending machine, comprising:
- (a) a vessel for holding the media to be blended;
  - (b) a rotatable drive shaft inside of the vessel, for transmitting rotational motion to the blending tool; and
  - (c) a blending tool mounted to the drive shaft inside the vessel, said blending tool comprising a shank having a location of attachment to the drive shaft, a collision surface having a collision profile, and a connector mechanism pivotally connecting the collision surface to the shank for connecting the collision surface to the shank at a location spaced apart from the attachment location, wherein pivoting at the connector mechanism varies the collision profile of the collision surface.

Please add the following new claims 20-22:

- 20) (New) The blending tool of **Claim 1**, wherein the shank has an end region spaced apart from the attachment location and wherein the connector mechanism connects to the shank within the end region.
- 21) (New) The blending tool of **Claim 1**, wherein the connector mechanism holds the collision surface in a rigid position during rotation of the tool.
- 22) (New) The blending tool of **Claim 1**, wherein the height of the tool is the dimension orthogonal to the plane of rotation and wherein pivoting at the connector mechanism varies the height of the collision surface.